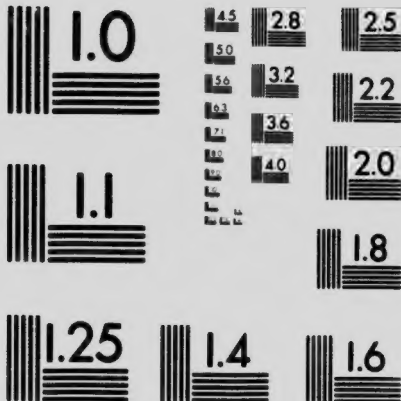




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PILGRIMS AND STRANGERS

A PICTURE IN TWO LIGHTS

BY

J. E. MIDDLETON



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TORONTO:
The Crocker Printing Company

29817

HINTS FOR THE PRODUCTION

1. The Manuscript and Parts are the Property of the Author and are rented with the understanding that they will be returned complete and in good order.
2. After the entertainment is given, ten per cent. of the gross proceeds will be due and payable to the Author. In case additional performances are given, the Author's share will be 6 per cent. for each performance except the first.
3. Appoint a Director, and be sure that his or her instructions are accepted without question. If you have a suggestion make it after the rehearsal. If it is not satisfactory, be cheerful.
4. No important change in the Manuscript is to be made without the concurrence of the Author, who owns the copyright. The one German sentence may be omitted if you desire.
5. Impress those taking part with the necessity for attending EVERY rehearsal, and for speaking with great distinctness. Don't mumble.
6. Do your rehearsing in a room as large as the platform you expect to use. Mark with overturned chairs the places for the entries and for the heavier furniture. The chairs needed in the action should always be placed in the same relative positions. For the entertainment you need no curtain, but it would be advisable to have the two entrances to the platform screened from public view. Small curtains of turkey red would do this.
7. Do not attempt to learn the parts until after five rehearsals. Then doing without the books will be found an easy matter. Don't speak *while you are moving*, but either just before, or just after. Be prompt and decided in your movements, and in taking your speeches. Don't dawdle, and *as far as possible*, keep your faces to the audience.
8. Please accept the Author's good wishes for your complete success.

Abbreviations in the MS. are thus explained. Consider, as you face the audience, that the stage is divided, in imagination, into nine squares, as follows:

Left Front or L. F.	Centre Front or C. F.	Right Front or R. F.
Left Centre or L. C.	Centre or C.	Right Centre or R. C.
Left Rear or L. R.	Rear Centre or R. C.	Right Rear or R. R.

PERSONS OF THE PLAY.

Rev. John Smith, a Methodist Minister.

Mrs. Smith.

Violet, their daughter, aged 18.

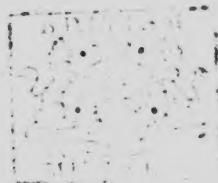
Billy, their son, aged 20.

Mary Ann, an Irish servant.

Reuben Fairfax, a cantankerous Trustee.

Ladies of the Congregation: Mrs. Rousmeyer, Mrs. McCann, Miss Withers, Mrs. Folsome, Mrs. Winfield, Mrs. Gusterson, Mrs. Grigson, Mrs. Stone, Mrs. Spettigue, Mrs. Powers, Mrs. Weston, Miss Swift, Miss Reesor.

Note.—For the performance of this Play a bare platform can be made suitable, if there is a wall at the back of it. In place of a curtain, the lights may be turned out for, say, ten seconds. In case a stage is available, use a plain interior set, well lighted.



LIGHT NUMBER ONE (DULL)

SCENE: The living-room of the Smith's in disorder. A roll of carpet lies at the right (*facing the audience*) in front of a small box full of books and a chair. Other chairs are at Left Rear and Left Front. On the left side is a piano and stool. There is a step-ladder standing at Rear Centre, and in front is a packing box containing framed pictures packed in bed-clothes. Doors at Left and Right Front.

(*Vi. and Billy discovered unpacking pictures, kneeling on opposite sides of the Box, Vi. to the left of it.*)

VIOLET.—Oh! (*Puts finger in her mouth, then withdraws it.*) Don't be so rough, Billy Smith. You hurt my finger.

BILLY.—(*Forcibly*). I hate moving.

VI.—Do you think I am responsible?

BILL.—If you were, Sis, I'd hurt all your fingers (*Starts unpacking.*)

VI.—Oh, you mean thing! Billy! you'll break glass!

BILL (*kneeling upright*).—Vi., this idea of packing pictures in bedding makes such a hit with me (*Throws a blanket behind him.*) Look here! (*Tugging at a quilt.*) If I pull on this quilt I'll spill father's Ordination Class, John Wesley, Joe Willis and Queen Victoria.

VI.—Well, don't spill Queen Victoria. You might hurt her fingers.

BILL.—Smarty.

VI.—Smarty yourself.

BILL.—I'm going to hang some of these. (*Rising.*) I hate moving.

VI.—You said that before. (*Hands framed photograph to him.*) Hang Joe, if you like. I wish he were here ——— to ——— to hold the stepladder.

BILL.—I don't want it held. (*Goes to ladder and turns.*) If he were here it wouldn't be stepladders he would be holding. (*Mounts two steps.*) It would be hands. (*No answer.*)

(*Billy mounts to top of ladder.*)

I said ——— hands.

VI.—Don't be so fresh.

BILL (*looking at photo*).—Handsome fellow, Joe. How many letters has he sent you, Vi.?

VI. (*kneeling upright*).—Not one. Oh, Billy. (*Face in her hands.*)

BILL (*runs down ladder*).—Vi., I didn't know you ——— you cared. (*Vi. nods.*)

BILL.—Maybe he hasn't our new address. (*Looking at photo.*)

VI.—Yes, he has. I gave it to him, and, and he promised to write every day.

BILL.—Oh, did he? (*Tosses photo on the blanket.*) Give me Queen Victoria.

VI. (*pointing at rear of box*).—She's over there.

BILL (*picking up the picture*).—Vi., I'm sorry I hurt your finger, but I hate moving.

VI.—It's better now. Maybe he lost it.

BILL (*puzzled for a moment*).—Oh, the address. (*Goes back to step ladder.*) Maybe, maybe. But I never did think much of Drug Clerks.

VI.—A Drug Clerk is as good as a Milliner, I guess.

BILL.—I don't know why you mention her. She never gave two cents for me. And her grammar was awful. (*Hangs Queen's picture.*) Of course she was pretty, but — (*POSTMAN'S DOUBLE KNOCK off Left. Vi. hears it and makes swift EXIT L.*)

Bill, does not notice that she is gone.

A girl needs grammar as well as good looks. How's that? (*Whistles God Save the King.*)

(*Suddenly perceives Vi's absence. Stops whistling, comes down ladder, starts again for box, but pauses on the way to stare down at Joe's portrait. Shoves hands deep in his pockets and whistles "Believe me if all those endearing young charms."*)

RE-ENTER VIOLET, pouty.

VI.—No letter yet.

BILL.—What's the diff.? I guess there are other fellows. I know there are other girls.

VI.—Billy, you are so heartless. No; I don't mean that. I mean——. I mean——. Oh, I don't know. (*Sits in chair, Left Front.*) Billy! That picture is crooked.

BILL.—What? (*Turns to look at it.*) I guess it is. (*Goes up ladder and straightens it.*) That all right? (*Vi. nods.*)

(*Sitting on top.*) Vi., a druggist is all right. Any job is all right if it means staying in one place. Moving is the extreme tip of The Limit so far as I am concerned. He loved her—but she moved away. (*Slides down ladder.*)

VI.—I hate this place, and I hate the Stationing Committee. So there!

BILL.—Where's Mother?

VI.—Downtown, buying tacks.

BILL.—Tacks! Huh. Hammer and tacks, hammer and tacks!

VI.—Father's writing a sermon, without any books.
(*Suddenly takes last picture out of box with a quilt.*)
This box can go out now.

BILL. (*Thinking of other things.*)—Maybe it will be all right here when we get used to it; of course, not like Bentonville, but—. I'm going to get a job during the holidays.

VI.—How do you know?

BILL.—Well, I applied for one at Fairfax's Grocery.

VI.—Billy! A grocery!

BILL.—Why not? Brains are needed in the grocery business, and I have 'em.

VI.—What did the man say? Will he take you?

BILL.—(*Drags box towards Right Rear.*) I don't know. He wasn't in.

ENTER MARY ANN, *Left.*

MARY ANN.—Oh, Miss, but this is the quare house. A rat that long (*indicating*) has run undher the sink — jist.

VI. (*Alarmed.*)—Oh.

BILL. (*interested.*)—Has he a hole there?

MARY ANN.—I dunno. Och, it's awful. I didn't wait to look.

VI.—I knew this would be a perfectly dreadful appointment for father.

BILL. (*Starting for L. Door.*)—Come on, Vi.

VI.—I will not. You go and help him, Mary Ann.

EXIT BILL.

MARY ANN (*hesitating*).—What do you want for lunch, Miss Vi'let?

VI.—Oh, anything. Sandwiches and tea, I guess.

MARY ANN.—Yes, Ma'am. (*Starts to go, slowly.*)

VI.—You'll have to serve it here. I won't eat in that dirty dining-room.

(*Noise of a stick Off.*)

Oh! (*Clasping hands.*) Mary Ann! Do you think it will come in here?

MARY ANN.—Oh, Miss; I hope so. It's hard to work among 'em.

EXIT MARY ANN.

VI.—Well, I like that.

REV. JOHN.—(*Off.*) Violet! Violet!

VI.—Yes, father. (*Starts across stage to R.*)

ENTER R. REV. JOHN.

REV.—(*Just inside door.*) Violet, my child, did you come across Foster's Cyclopædia of Poetical Illustrations?

VI.—(*Violently shaking her head.*) Not yet.

REV.—Or Marcus Dods on Genesis?

VI.—No.

(*Rev. shakes his head slowly and sighs.*)

EXIT REV., R.

(*VI. looks after him.*)

BILL.—(*Off Left.*) Oh, Vi.!

VI.—Coming. (*Door bell rings.*) Oh! (*She runs to step-ladder, folds it and lays it down. Then she clears away the scattered bed clothes, putting them behind the piano. She finds Joe's photograph, looks at it for a moment, and sighs.*)

ENTER L. MARY ANN. (*Vi., confused, hides picture behind her back.*)

MARY ANN.—There is a gentleman here; I mane a man, to see your father.

ENTER FAIRFAX. (*Mary Ann is startled to see him so close behind her.*)

VI.—Oh! Please come in. Father is in the study; but if your business is important——. Won't you sit down?

EXIT M.A.

(*He sits at Left Front.*)

(*Vi. crosses to R. Door.*)

FAIR.—Hm! Minister's daughter, I reckon?

VI.—(*Turning at door.*) Yes. What name, please?

FAIR.—I'm sorry to see ye wearin' that ribbon. Ribbons are vanity and vexation of spirit.

VI.—Well, I——. EXIT quickly.

(*Fairfax gets up and walks about. Stands, back to audience, facing Queen's picture.*)

ENTER BILLY L.

BILL.—Oh, Vi., I got him all right. (*F turns.*) I beg your pardon, sir. I thought my sister was here.

FAIR.—Preacher's son? Ha!

BILL.—Yes, sir. You wish to see father?

FAIR.—'M, yes. Partly. My name is Fairfax. Reuben Fairfax.

BILL.—(*Smiling.*) The Grocer?

(*Fairfax bows.*)

BILL.—Oh, then—— Did they tell you I called?

FAIR.—Yes. No vacancy.

BILL.—(*Crestfallen.*) Oh.

FAIR.—S'pose you are like all other Ministers' sons, disgrace to the parsonage?

BILL.—Sir, I ——

FAIR.—No preacher can train a boy. Nope. Wouldn't have one in my place. Better be sure than sorry. Yep.

BILL.—You are offensive, sir.

FAIR.—Entirely mutual, young man. Entirely mutual.

BILL.—(*Impulsively.*) I'm glad you have no position for me. Glad ——

(*ENTER REV. JOHN R. Surprised at Bill's manner.*)

I wouldn't work for you for—— For a million dollars a minute. (*Starts for door L.*)

REV. JOHN.—William!

BILL.—(*Turning.*) Yes, sir.

REV. J.—What is the meaning of this?

FAIR.—I don't like preachers' sons, and I said so. I always tell the truth.

REV.—If the gentleman is offended, William——

FAIR.—Not at all, not at all. I never get offended. It's unchristian.

EXIT BILL L.

REV.—I am sorry I cannot offer you a better welcome, Mr. —— ah——

FAIR.—My name is Fairfax, Reuben Fairfax. I'm one of the trustees of the church.

REV.—Yes? You will have a chair?

FAIR.—No, thankee. I talk better standin'. I don't like the preachers as a rule, and the people are not much either. No, sir.

REV.—You interest me. Pray proceed.

FAIR.—They want to build a school room, and I won't have it. It's a waste of money. I just called to warn ye agin it.

REV.—Indeed! I have not become fully acquainted yet with the conditions, but I believe that the young people have collected a good portion of the funds.

FAIR.—Yes. Epworth League. I don't believe in the Epworth League. Just a courtin' school in my opinion.

REV.—Are you a bachelor, sir.

FAIR.—Widower.

REV.—Ah, yes. Is there anything else?

FAIR.—You ought to preach a sermon on Gossips as soon as you can. The Church is full of 'em. And Ben Lamont sold me a horse that was blind of an eye. Better preach on horse tradin'. And a sermon on Givin' might do good. The interest on the mortgage is overdue. And the Ladies' Aid is bound to have a tea-meetin'. I object to 'em. I want you to preach agin tea-meetin's. They're unscriptural. And a sermon on Holiness would be a good thing. I ain't sinned any for fifteen years.

REV.—Fifteen years? I congratulate you, sir.

ENTER L. MRS. SMITH.

But it is quite impossible for me to decide so early what policy I shall adopt here. My dear, Mr. Fairfax, one of our Trustees; Mrs. Smith.

MRS. S.—How do you do, Mr. Fairfax. Won't you have a seat?

FAIR.—No thankee, mum, I'm used to standin'.

REV.—You will be interested in Mr. Fairfax, my dear, he has been giving me some suggestions.

FAIR.—Are ye goin' to preach on them subjects?

REV.—I am not certain. I cannot commit myself. I may not agree with your — ah — your diagnosis.

FAIR.—That's enough. (*Puts on hat and starts for door at L.*) I see you're like the rest. What the people want here is Rebuke, Rebuke, I tell ye. You'll stop that tea-meetin', or you'll hear from me. Yes, and that school-room buildin'. I ain't goin' to be responsible for sich things.

EXIT L.

MRS. S.—John. It's a shame. (*Puts her hand on his arm.*)

REV. (*taking hand and patting it*)—Don't think of it, my dear.

MRS. S.—But it is a burning shame. These worries are wearing you down.

REV.—Tut, tut.

MRS. S.—Everything seems to be going wrong. The woman next door hasn't spoken to me yet. And Mary Ann is cranky. As for the children, I never saw them in such a temper. John, one of the ladies of the Congregation has called. Not a single one.

REV. (*releasing her hand and pacing up and down*)—If they are like Mr. Fairfax, my dear, that might be an advantage.

MRS. S. (*sitting on piano stool wearily*)—At Bentonville they met us at the station. You remember?

REV.—Yes.

MRS. S.—I am afraid I shall not like it here. Do you know, John, I am getting old.

REV. (*pausing, surprised*)—My dear!

MRS. S.—Yes. I can't relish the Itinerancy the way I used to do. It is so hard to meet new people.

REV.—Perhaps the ladies remain away from — ah — a sense of delicacy. They are more reserved in a town, you know.

MRS. S.—A fine sense of delicacy this Fairfax person has—interrupting your sermon too. (*Rising*). John, you are worried. (*Comes to his side, her hand on his shoulder.*)

REV.—Tut, tut.

MRS. S.—You can't deceive me.

REV.—The church is beautiful, Mollie. Stained glass windows and such tasteful decorations. (*She turns away with a sigh.*) We shall soon get acquainted. (*Suddenly he sees the book-box at Right Centre.*) Ha! (*Picks up large red book.*) The very thing I wanted. Perhaps Dods is here too. (*Pulls out a dozen books and finds a blue volume. Rises with the books in his arms.*) Ah. I shall get on better now. And Mollie, you will feel better in the morning. You are not yourself, not yourself. (*At the door, Right.*) And (*clearing his throat*) you are not growing old.

(*Phone Bell rings.*)

MRS. S. (*laughs and drops a curtsey*)—Thank you, sir. There's the phone.

REV.—I'll answer it.

EXIT REV. R.

(*Mrs. S. blows a kiss after him.*)

ENTER BILLY L.

BILL.—Mother, did you see that old wretch?

MRS. S.—Hush, Will. He's a Trustee.

BILL.—I don't care (*kicks a chair*).

MRS. S.—Will! That is Parsonage furniture.

BILL. (*sitting, impatiently*)—I wish we owned our own chairs. Then I could kick one if I liked. What about that carpet? If we could get it down things would look a little more comfortable.

MRS. S.—Oh, not now.

BILL.—Mother, Joe Willis hasn't written to Vi. yet. Pretty mean, I call it.

MRS. S.—But we have been here only two days.

BILL.—Yes, and three days at Uncle Tom's. That's five. He pretended he was all broke up when she left.

MRS. S.—Broken up, you mean.

BILL.—Well, it's all the same.

MRS. S.—Not for a matriculant. Have you written to Gwendoline?

BILL.—Oh, that's different. She didn't give a hoot for me. I'm so kinder awkward.

(MRS. S. *Laughs.*)

It's all right. She said so.

MRS. S.—You are very stimulating. Will. Suppose we both look a little more cheerful. Your father braves it well.

BILL.—Braves what? Oh, this place? I know he does; but he is like that. I'm not.

ENTER VI. RIGHT.

VI.—Mother! There will be no Choir on Sunday.

BILL.—(*Shoving his hands in his pockets.*) No Choir? (*Pacing to and fro.*)

VI.—The leader has just telephoned his resignation.

BILL.—What is the matter with him?

VI.—He says he isn't appreciated.

BILL.—Ha! S'pose he wants the congregation to eat out of his hand. Look cheerful, Mother. Look cheerful. Be brave, like Dad. Maybe Mr. Fairfax would lead the singing with a tuning-fork. Sis, you'll have to play.

VI.—On the first Sunday? Not much.

MRS. S.—Children! Children.

(ENTER MARY ANN with tray, plate of sandwiches and four cups of tea.)

BILL.—Ha! Lunch.

MARY ANN.—Where'll I put it, Ma'am?

MRS. S.—Oh, I don't know.

BILL.—I do. Wait. *EXIT L.*

MRS. S.—Why did you not serve it in the dining-room?

VI.—I told her not to. That dining-room is awful. Mary Ann and I are going to scrub it this very afternoon.

(RE-ENTER BILL. with empty barrel. He wheels it to Centre.)

BILL.—Put the tray here. Get chairs, Vi. All right, Mary Ann; that will do. I'll call Dad. *(EXIT M. A., L.) (At R. Door.)* Dad! Lunch. *(Back to tray, looking at sandwiches.)* What are they? Salmon, eh? I haven't had a salmon sandwich since Joe Willis and I gave the picnic. You remember, Vi.?

VI. *(Weakly.)*—Yes.

(All three seated.)

BILL. *(Looking at Vi.)*—There you go, thinking of him again.

MRS. S.—It was you who mentioned him, Will.

BILL.—Oh, of course I'll get the blame, every time. *(Takes a sandwich.)*

VI.—Billy! You never asked a blessing.

BILL.—You never can tell. Maybe a blessing isn't fashionable here.

MRS. S.—My dear, you must not be flippant. It isn't pleasant.

ENTER R. REV. JOHN.

REV.—Ah! All ready, I perceive. It may be on a barrel, and it may be scant provision, but for what we are about to receive, the Lord make us truly thankful. *(Sitting.)* Mollie, a cup of tea.

BILL.—What are you going to do about the Choir?

REV.—I do not know yet, my boy. Perhaps we shall call for volunteers. I trust the organist will remain loyal. If so, we can get along for a week or so. She is a talented girl, I understand. A Mrs. Weston.

BILL.—Who said so? Fairfax?

REV.—Will! You must not mind Mr. Fairfax. I am sorry that you lost your temper this morning. We must remember that our duty is to serve all sorts and conditions of men.

BILL.—Well, he is It, all right. Pass the sugar, please. What's the matter, Mother? You're not eating anything. Try a sandwich.

REV.—Yes, my dear. Do. *(She shakes her head.)* Not another headache I hope.

MRS.—No, I think not. But I do not feel hungry.

BILL.—*(Satirically.)* Excitement. She has had so many callers.

VI.—*(Indignantly.)* Billy!

REV.—Callers? No one has been here.

VI.—That is the trouble. Can't you see? We might as well be tramps so far as the Congregation cares. One would think that there might be a little bit, a teenie bit, of interest. I wish we had gone to Belleville. We were invited there.

REV.—But we were invited here, too.

BILL.—Oh, chop it, Vi! Chop it! Give me another sandwich.

VI.—Well, you would think some woman would run in. It wasn't like this in Bentonville. Folks were so neighborly. Often Mrs. Ransome came over before breakfast—to borrow salt or something.

BILL.—Yes. She was a fine borrower, all right, and the family, too. Do you remember the day young Tom borrowed my old boots?

REV.—That will do, Will. Mrs. Ransome was a fine woman. We are here, and we shall like it in time. The people are not demonstrative in the city, you know. Possibly we shall find them better than we expect.

MRS. S.—(*Wearily.*) Everything will depend on us. If we are cold and distant, the people will be. If we are hospitable—

BILL.—Oh, we'll be hospitable, all right. Having folks for dinner is our specialty.

REV.—We do not have many for dinner.

BILL.—Perhaps not; but we have oceans of 'em for tea.

MRS. S.—It is our duty.

REV.—And a pleasant duty.

BILL.—Beg to differ.

MRS.—More tea, Will?

BILL.—No, thanks. (*Rises.*) I'm going to look for a job. Come on, Vi.

VI.—Billy! And the pictures not hung.

BILL.—I'll do it later. (*Door bell Off, Left.*) I'll go.

EXIT BILL L.

MRS.—It is too bad Mr. Fairfax called. (*VI. pats her hair ribbon.*) Will felt his remarks very keenly, and I confess I did, too. Oh, John, you don't suppose there are many like him?

REV.—If they were all like him, my dear, the opportunity for service would be all the greater. I am sorry you are out of sorts, Mollie. I do not seem to be able to work well when I am concerned about your health. (*Sighs, and rises.*)

(RE-ENTER BILL L.)

BILL.—Mother, the Ladies' Aid is coming to-night.

MRS. S.—(*Rising.*) Coming? Where?

BILL.—Here. The President's kid called to tell us. They want to help us settle.

REV.—(*Triumphantly.*) Ha! What do you think of that?

VI.—I think that we had better get this carpet down. The place is a sight.

MRS. S.—I'm worn out. How in the world shall we entertain them?

BILL.—Let them entertain us.

VI.—But the carpet?

BILL.—Let's put it down now. (*Calling.*) Mary Ann.

REV.—I don't mind giving a hand. The room would look better. It might seem more like a home.

MRS. S.—But we haven't a bit of cake in the house.

BILL.—What of it? The Ladies' Aid know that. Surely you do not want to start feeding the Congregation already.

ENTER MARY ANN L.

Here, Mary Ann. Take this stuff out (*indicating the tray. M. A. takes tray and EXIT L.*)

I'll look after this box afterwards. (*Puts big box in Left Rear corner.*)

REV.—This one (*indicating books*) can go in the dining-room. Give me a hand with it. (*Take it off at R. Then immediately busy themselves unrolling the carpet, getting end nearest audience straight.*)

(*Mrs. Smith sits down and leans head on arm.*)

VI.—Mother, dear. Please don't.

MRS.—Violet, I am so tired.

VI.—Yes. We all are; but don't. It won't help us any to cry. I could just bawl. I'm so lonesome. You'd better lie down and have a rest. Come. (*She leads her to R. door.*) Maybe things will look brighter to-morrow.

MRS.—But the house is in such a state, and the Ladies' Aid—

VI.—Bother the Ladies' Aid. (*Shoves her off R.*)

EXIT MRS. S.

REV.—Now, Will, I'll stretch this to the corner, and you get the hammer and tacks. (*Kneels down, face to audience.*)

BILL.—(*Goes to back of room and immediately returns with tacks in a saucer, and a small hammer.*) That ought to be our coat of arms, the emblem of the Itinerancy. A Hammer rampant, on a field of tacks.

REV. (*laughing*).—Excellent! Excellent. The Heraldry of Methodism. A hammer rampant. So it is. So it is.

VI. (*Who has been examining the carpet.*)—That's right. The worn spot under the table. I was afraid you had the carpet the wrong way.

(*Bill on his knees, hands his father a tack. He prepares to drive it.*)

VI.—Wouldn't it be a perfectly lovely thing to have a new carpet—without a worn spot.

(*REV., in attempting to drive a tack, strikes his thumb.*)

REV.—Great guns! (*Rises. Puts thumb in his mouth, and dances about.*)

BILL.—Dad!

VI.—Did you hit your thumb?

REV. (*angry*).—Of all silly questions, that is the silliest. Do you think I am jumping around for exercise? Really, I would be glad to see sometimes one gleam of intelligence in this family. I never saw the like. Never! Never! Never. (*Suddenly and forcefully.*) I'm not going to like this place.

(CURTAIN.)

LIGHT NUMBER TWO (BR: T)

SCENE: Same as before, save that a small sofa is placed at the Right Front near the door, and that a dozen or more chairs are piled in a disorderly manner at the back of the stage. There is a round table at the rear and the packing-boxes are gone.

In case there is no curtain, and the lights are put out at the close of the first Act for a few seconds, the stage can be arranged during the five or six minutes' wait by persons not taking part in the play. When all is ready, turn out the lights again. Vi and Mrs. S. take their places in the dark. The lights come on, and the second Act begins.

A word concerning the characters of Act II. is necessary.

Mrs. Rousmeyer is stout and extremely unfashionable. She should have the general appearance of a pillow with a string tied loosely about it.

Miss Withers is a very precise old maid.

Mrs. Winfield is very pretty, stylish and vivacious in manner.

Mrs. Gusterson, a gushing person, well dressed.

Mrs. Grigson, bossy in manner and careless in dress.

Mrs. Stone, old and gruff; careless in dress.

Mrs. Spettigue, continuously mournful, and rusty-looking.

Mrs. Weston should be small and thin, and snippy.

Miss Reesor should be a young girl, with a good singing voice and a graceful manner.

The rest of the characters should be particularly well dressed.

MRS. SMITH and VIOLET are dusting, one on each side of the stage.

(Door bell rings.)

VI.—For the land's sake! Is that——

MRS.—They would not come this early.

VI. (*looking at wrist-watch.*)—Twenty to eight. Mother! Maybe it's a wedding. Ha! Ha! I'll go.

EXIT L.

(Mrs. S. dusts piano.)

(Voices heard Off.)

MRS. S.—Oh! (*Crosses to R. Door and puts duster outside.*)

ENTER VI.

VI.—Please come in. Mother, some of the church ladies.

ENTER Miss Withers, Mrs. Rousmeyer, Mrs. McCann, Left.

They are arranged in this order, looking towards the audience:

VI.

McC.

W.

MRS. S.

ROUS. .

MRS. S.—(*Bows and smiles.*) So glad.

ROUS.—Mebbe ve'd petter indtrodoose us yet. I'm Mrs. Rousmeyer. Dis is Mrs. McCann, and dis is Miss Vithers.

WITHERS.—Withers. (*Shake hands.*)

MRS. S.—I am so glad to see you all. I do hope you will excuse me, the place is so——

McCANN.—That is why we came early. (*Moves chair at Rear Centre.*)

WITHERS. (*Putting a parcel on the piano.*)—We are the sub-committee.

ROUS.—Yah. De Soob Gommittee. You don'd know it? Vell now, isn't dat foony? (*Laughs.*) 'Meppe you didn't haf soob-gommittees already in Bentonville?

(*VI behind the women, trying not to laugh.*)

MRS. S.—Well, no I—— What are the duties?

McCANN.—We have our Ladies' Aid meetings at the members' houses, and the sub-committee goes ahead to help prepare.

MRS. S.—How charming.

ROUS.—Yah. Und here ve are; und meppe if ve had some doosters ve could help do de chairs. Yes? No?

(*VI. laughs aloud.*)

VI.—Oh, excuse me, but I think you are all just lovely. (*Crosses to R. Door.*) All of you.

EXIT VI. R.

WITHERS.—Mrs. McCann, shall we go to the kitchen? I have the tea. (*Taking parcel off piano.*)

McCANN.—Yes, indeed. (*Goes to L. Front.*)

(*Mrs. Rous. crosses to sofa.*)

MRS. S.—How do you manage all this, Miss Withers? Where did you get the idea?

McCANN.—Our President, Mrs. Grigson, is a marvel.

WITHERS.—We have everything organized. There is the meeting committee, and the membership committee, and the programme committee, and the de-serving poor committee, and——

McCANN.—The missionary committee.

WITH.—Oh, yes; and the evangelistic committee.

ROUS. (*At the sofa.*)—Und de flower gommittee, und de finance gommittee. Ach, yah! Ve are joost full (*Sits*) of organizations. Vere's de dooster?

EXEUNT McC. and W. Left.

MRS. S.—There is one outside that door (*Pointing Right.*) (*Mrs. Rous. goes after it, and Mrs. Smith laughs until she cries.*)

RE-ENTER ROUS.

ROUS.—Yah. Dot's right. Laugh und grow fat. Look at me. I tell Rousmeyer I have laffed myself into obesities from looking at his face. (*Laughs.*) Ach, it is so foony. But he is a goot man, Rousmeyer. He drifes a dray. (*Begins dusting.*)

MRS. S.—It's like a tonic to see you, Mrs. Rousmeyer. I was so despondent to-day. No one had called. Well, scarcely anyone. Ah, do you know Mr. Fairfax?

ROUS.—Ach, der leiber! Him? It vos too bad. Er ist nichts leibeswurdiges—not nice, you know. (*Crosses to piano. Turns, arms akimbo.*) He is to every Minister ve haf what Saint Paul called it, a t'orn in de meat.

MRS. S. (*Laughing.*)—I don't wonder. Mr. Smith is a patient man, but—

ROUS.—Mr. Fairfax? He iss so sure of going to Heafen dat ve have not vooried ofer him fer years, (*Fixing chairs.*) Dere. De chairs iss all right aind't it? Und meppe (*Door bell rings.*)

(*Mrs. R. comes down to Left Front.*)

MRS. S. (*Rising.*)—Don't go. The maid—

ROUS.—Ach, boot de Soob Gommittee goes to de door yet. (*Turning at door.*) It's in de Consti-tooshun. *EXIT.*

(*MRS. S. sits down and wipes her eyes, smiling the while.*)

ENTER R. BILLY.

BILL.—I thought I heard voices.

MRS.—You did, Will. Come in.

BILL.—No, thanks.

EXIT BILL.

MRS. S. (*Rising and going towards Right.*)—But Will, wait. (*No answer.*)

ENTER L MARY ANN.

MARY ANN.—There's another, ma'am.

MRS. S.—Another what?

MARY.—Another rat. By this an' that ma'am, the kitchen of this Parsonage is no place for a poor work-in' gurl.

MRS. S.—We must get a cat.

MARY.—Och, sure anny wan of thim would shlap a cat in the face. They do be that bowld. Them women say I'm narvous. Yis. I am. An' by yer leave I'm goin' to take a turn to the Dhrug Store.

MRS. S.—Going out? With all these people —

MARY.—Yis. I'm goin' to buy the laste tise in life of strichnine, about two dollars' worth. Ayther me or the rats will take it. Both' av us won't live in the same house. (*Voices behind her.*) Och. Here's more av thim.

MRS. S. (*alarmed*)—Rats?

MARY.—No, women.

EXIT MARY ANN.

ENTER ROUS. She and Mary Ann collide.

ROUS.—Ooh! Dis iss de Flowers Gommittee.

ENTER Gusterson, Winfield, Folsome. Left. Carrying flowers and vases.

GUST.—(*rushing to Mrs. Smith*)—Mrs. Smith. (*Kisses her.*) We are so glad to see you. I am Mrs. Gusterson.

ROUS.—Yah. De Regordink Stoord's vife.

MRS. S.—Yes.

Position as follows:

ROUS.

FOL.

WIN.

S.

GUS.

GUST.—Mrs. Folsome, Mrs. Smith. You know Mrs. Folsome is one of our most active workers. Now you know you are, my dear. And this is Mrs. Winfield. She has only lately come to our midst. She is from Bad Axe, Michigan.

MRS. SMITH.—Indeed!

GUST.—Yes. Isn't it a perfectly terrible place to come from, and just fancy, she was even born there. You wouldn't think it, would you. She is so charming.

ROUS. (*indignant*)—Did you tink she would be porn mit tomahawks in her hand, yes?

WIN.—They all tease me about Bad Axe. I think it is a romantic name.

MRS. S.—What lovely flowers.

GUST.—We are so glad you like them. We just put them in our own Vawses, you know.

ROUS. (*aside*)—Vaysses.

FOL.—Yes, we knew yours would be somewhere in the depths of a packing case.

MRS. S.—I never heard of such consideration.

WIN.—I think the ladies here are perfectly wonderful. At Bad Axe we never brought flowers to our Minister, or Vawses either.

ROUS. (*aside*)—Vaysses.

FOL. (*takes Mrs. Winfield's flowers and puts both hers and her own on the piano*)—These will do very well here in the meantime. If you will excuse me.

MRS. S. (*goes R.*)—There is a small table in the Library.

EXIT R.

ROUS. (*sitting at Left Front*)—Vot did I dell you. Isn't she lofely? Und de whole family. I ain't seen 'em all, but I know it.

GUST.—My dear Mrs. Winfield. You ought to join the Daughters of the Empire.

WIN. (*crossing to sofa*)—But I'm an American.

GUST.—Oh yes, I know that you were born on the other side, but this is your adopted country, you know, and the Empire is such a noble thing.

WIN.—I'm not so sure (*sitting*).

GUST.—Mrs. Winfield!

WIN.—You see I belong to the Daughters of the Revolution.

GUST.—Dear me. How remarkably odd. (*Goes upstage.*)

ROUS.—Dere vill be vights here unless you two vos separationed. Ooh. Terrible aindt it? (*Laughs.*)

RE-ENTER MRS. S., followed by Bill carrying small table.

MRS. S.—Put it here, Will. (*Indicating place beside sofa.*) Ladies, my son.

Will, Mrs. Gusterson, Mrs. Winfield, Mrs. —

FOLSOME.—(*Takes Mrs. Gust.'s flowers and puts them on small table.*)

MRS. S.—Yes, and Mrs. Rousmeyer.

(*Bill bows nervously.*)

ROUS.—How iss it?

GUST.—Now you mustn't think of remembering our names all at once. The thing is impossible. It is a rule of our Ladies' Aid that we must introduce ourselves to strangers at least seven times. Such a sweet idea!

WIN.—They introduced themselves to me unto seventy times seven. (*To Bill*) I'm Mrs. Winfield. You won't forget me, will you?

BILL.—Indeed no. (*Sits on sofa beside her.*)

(*Mrs. S. crosses to L and talks in dumb show with Mrs. G. and Mrs. R. Mrs. F. is straightening chairs at back of stage.*)

WIN.—How do you think you will like it here?

BILL.—I don't know yet. Strangers can never tell.

WIN.—But I'm a stranger too; almost, I mean. I have been here only three months.

BILL.—American?

WIN.—How did you guess? Mrs. Rousmeyer, Mr. Smith knew immediately that I was an American. Isn't that remarkable?

ROUS.—Nein. Beople alwayss know I am Cher-man. It moost be somthin' in the agcent. Yes? No? DOOR BELL (*all laugh*). Und dere's de bell again. Somepody might go oudt in de kitchen. Miss Vithers und Mrs. McCann iss all alone.

EXIT ROUS.

GUST.—Maybe it would be a good idea. Oh no, Mrs. Smith, you must remain here. We can manage very nicely. Now you will come to the Daughters' Meeting, won't you? Friday mornings at eleven.

EXIT.

FOL. (*coming to piano and sitting on stool*)—I think I shall remain here. It is rather embarrassing I should think to see so many new faces.

MRS. S. (*standing by the piano*)—That is one of the (*pauses*) pleasures of the Itinerancy. Often it frightens me when I think of all the people I know. (*Come to C.*)

ENTER rapidly L. Mrs. Grigson.

GRIG.—Mrs. Smith. Delighted. (*Shakes hands.*)

FOL.—Our President, Mrs. Grigson.

ENTER MRS. ROUS.

GRIG (*to Mrs. S.*)—You will be assigned to the evangelistic committee, Mrs. Smith, the cottage prayer meeting sub-committee, which meets the second Monday in the month at the call of the chair.

MRS. S.—But —

GRIG.—Oh, the Minister's wife always serves on that Committee. It does not involve any canvassing, and it's all settled. Thank you so much. (*Turning.*) Mrs. Rousmeyer, I brought a cake. Will you take it to the kitchen. (*Mrs. R. pays no attention.*) Ah, Mrs. Winfield and Mr. Smith, I presume. (*Crossing.*) Happy to meet you, sir. Positively I have been so busy to-day. This work of organization is so wearing on the nerves. I suppose you are not nearly settled Mrs. Smith. No, of course not. Is anyone in the kitchen yet? Why, yes, Mrs. McCann called on her way here. I'll just step out and see how things are going.

EXIT L. Rapidly.

BILL.—What a whirlwind!

WIN.—Yes, isn't she funny? I call her William J. Bryan, privately you know. But she has a lovely niece. You are interested in pretty girls?

BILL.—Just now I am.

WIN.—Oh, that is an indiscretion.

BILL.—No. A compliment. DOOR BELL.

ROUS.—Dey all come in a minute, yah. Dot's vot it iss to be a Soob Gommittee.

EXIT ROUS.

(Mrs. F. and Mrs. S. talking in dumb show.)

ENTER R. VIOLET.

BILL. *(rising)*—Where have you been, Vi? This is Mrs. Winfield. She's a stranger too. My sister, Mrs. Winfield.

WIN.—Do sit down beside me, Miss Smith. I am sure you are bored to death by all this disturbance.

VI.—Not at all. I love disturbance. That is why Billy and I get on so well *(sits)*. I don't know what I shall do when he goes to College next Fall.

WIN.—How positively exciting. Tell me all about it. *(B gets chair and sets it at the Rear side of the sofa.)*

BILL.—Excuse me.

ENTER L. Mrs. Stone, Mrs. Spettigue, Mrs. Powers, followed later by Mrs. Rous. Fol. and Mrs. S. are at rear centre.

STONE.—Minister's wife, I suppose. I'm Mrs. Stone. This is Mrs. Spettigue and this Mrs. Powers. Now don't say you are glad to see us. How can you be till you know us better. *(Sees Bill and Vi.)* Ah, the children. Remarkably like their mother.

SPETTIGUE.—I trust Mrs. Smith will become a member of our Friday evening meeting. There are so few of us left now. Only Mr. Fairfax and —

MRS. S.—I have met Mr. Fairfax.

POWERS.—I don't like him.

SPET.—But he is a good man, and so earnest.

STONE.—Earnest, earnest. Indeed he is—in his objections.

SPET.—But he is so conscientious.

POWERS—I am told that he objects to tea-meetings.

STONE.—Of course he does. He hates every innocent amusement.

SPET.—Is a tea-meeting an amusement?

MRS. S.—I should say rather an infliction.

ROUS. (*laughs*)—Ha, ha. Yah. Iss it? I gife two gake's und a pound of loof sugar, und work afternoons gettin' grubs fron stingies, und set tables all day und pay to get in yet, me und Rousmeyer, und vash dishes until after Twelke o'clock already, ain't it. Amoosement. Yah. I laff myself at it. Tea meetin's. (*Bill laughs.*)

Dot's right. Enchoy yourselves.

WIN.—She is the sweetest old thing I ever saw.

ENTER REV. JOHN.—(*His thumb ticd up with a rag.*)

REV.—Ladies, this is indeed a pleasure. My dear, will you introduce me?

MRS. S. (*at left*)—Come right over here, John. This is Mrs. Folsome, and this—

ENTER L. MRS. GRIGSON.

GRIG.—Ladies. There are rats in the Parsonage. (*Sensation.*) Not here, in the kitchen. Did you ever hear of such a scandal? No, neither did I. We must have a special meeting next week to appoint a rat—Mrs. Stone, Mrs. Spettigue and Mrs. Powers to act in trap committee. In the meantime I shall appoint that capacity. Mrs. Stone will be the convener. The Minister's servant has left the house in a state of nervous collapse, because of the frequent appearance of the vermin under the sink. Possibly the committee pro tempore would be good enough to follow me to the kitchen. (*Starts to go, but pauses.*) Mr. Smith. (*Shakes hands with Rev.*) Delighted. I am Mrs. Grigson, President f the Ladies' Aid. And by the way, have you heard that the Choirmaster has resigned? My husband informed me.

REV. JOHN.—Unfortunately, yes.

GRIG.—What is the complaint?

STONE.—No complaint. Everybody is satisfied.

REV.—I hope the Choir will not follow his example.

GRIG.—I would consider it extremely unlikely. The Organist, Mrs. Weston, is a member of the Aid, and would not dream of resigning without my permission. Mrs. Stone, did you bring a cake?

STONE.—No, sandwiches. Salmor.

BILL (*to Mrs. Win.*)—Gracious. That is what we had for lunch. (*Vi. and Mrs. W. laugh.*)

SPET.—I did (*turning up her eyes*). An angel cake.

GRIG.—I venture to say that no one has brought Pickles. Not one of the Pickle Committee is here yet. The Organization must be strengthened.

EXIT GRIG L.

ROUS.—Der Bickle Gommittee? Who iss it? Ach. Dot is Mrs. Brainerd, poor voman.

WIN.—What is the matter with her, Mrs. Rousmeyer?

ROUS.—She is being operationed at de Hospital. Yah. Rousmeyer told me. She hass de Appendickitis.

STONE (*to Spet. and Powers*).—Come on. Let's go rat-catching. There is such a thing as too much President.

EXIT STONE L.

SPET. (*going towards door*)—I am afraid of the wretched things. (*Explaining to Mrs. Smith*). But they are so common in a seaport, you know. Ah-h-h-h.

EXIT.

POWERS.—I understand from our Missionary Literature that they are edible, under certain favorable conditions. (*Going towards door*). Of course, Mrs. Smith, you will belong to the Women's Missionary Society. The third Wednesday. I'm a life member.

EXIT.

MRS. S.—So am I. Violet, my dear, perhaps you will play.

VI.—Very well, Mother. (*Goes to piano.*)

ROUS. (*crosses to Win. and Bill.*)—Vot do you t'ink of dat? She aind't oudt of braactice, und she hass her moosie. Yah, a nice fraulein. But she looks too sorrowful yet. Iss she encaged?

DOOR BELL

Ach, dere it iss again. (*Crosses to Left and Exit.*)
(*Vi. plays a Chopin number—one of the shorter Studies, for instance.*)

[Enter quietly Mrs. Weston, Miss Swift and Miss Reesor. As the playing proceeds enter Mrs. Gusterson wearing an apron, and Mrs. Rousmeyer. People talk silently in groups. When she is done there is general applause.]

ROUS.—It's lofely, Mrs. Veston, aind't it?

WEST.—Indeed it is.

GUST. (*presenting Mrs. Weston*)—This is our dear Organist, Mr. Smith, and Miss Reesor one of the soloists, Mrs. Grigson's niece.

REV. JOHN (*shaking hands*).—Mrs. Weston, Miss Reesor. I trust you are not following the Choirmaster's example. We shall need you, Mrs. Weston.

WEST.—Thank you. But I do not blame Mr. Weatherly. People are so unappreciative. Don't you find it so, Miss Smith.

VI. (*crossing to R.*)—Well, not exactly, but I have had so little experience.

WEST. (*to Reesor*)—Only an amateur.

VI.—My brother, Mrs. Weston.

WEST.—How do you do? Miss Reesor, Mr. Smith.
(*Vi. sits.*)

BILL. (*immensely impressed*)—I am so glad. Will you sit down — beside me?

MRS. WIN.—Oh, Mr. Smith. I am deserted again.
(*Rises and goes towards Rear, smiling.*)

GUST.—Dear Mrs. Weston, wouldn't it be just sweet if Nellie would sing for us?

REES.—Oh please, Auntie, wait till I get my breath. (*Sits on sofa, Bill beside her.*)

ROUS. (*speaking at large*). Dot young man has tooken it away, I betche. Yah. Here's de eatables. Come now, get yourselves in circless yet.

[Enter McCann and Withers bearing small tables which they set at R. and L. Rear. Stone, Spettigue and Powers bring in trays with tea, sandwiches and cakes. Mrs. Grigson follows bearing a very small tray with cream and sugar on it.]

GRIG.—Ha. Now we shall get on. (*To Mrs. S.*). The work of superintending is so wearing. There are so many things to think of.

(*Loud and confused conversation while the party is being served as naturally as possible. Vi., Bill and Miss Reesor have an animated conversation with much laughter.*)

VI.—Billy is such an enthusiast.

McCANN.—Oh yes, Mrs. Smith. We always have a Bazaar — generally about Christmas time. And we do so well, never overcharge, you know.

STONE.—Made \$600 last year.

SMITH.—What a lot of work.

McCANN.—Yes, of course, but it is almost an institution now. We can undersell the stores.

FOL.—I don't think that is fair—quite.

GRIG.—What? Not fair? Not fair? And why, may I ask?

FOL.—Now Mrs. Grigson, you know I am no good at an argument. I just feel that way.

STONE.—Tut. Only merchants we compete with are Presbyterians. So what's the difference?

WIN.—Spoiling the Egyptians, I suppose.

MRS. S.—Well, even Presbyterians are Christians.

SPET.—Oh, do you really think so?

MRS. S.—I would go even further than that. I would include Anglicans.

GUST.—My dear Mrs. Smith, you are so sweetly liberal.

GRIG.—I doubt the principle. Another sandwich, please.

WIN.—Well over in Bad Axe —

GRIG.—Bad Axe is all very well in its way, but the cases are not parallel at all.

WIN.—What cases.

GRIG.—The ones you were about to state.

WIN.—Well, but I wasn't going to —

WITH.—The W. C. T. U. Bazaar —

STONE.—Don't talk to me about that Bazaar.

WITH.—Well we made a thousand dollars.

STONE.—Competing with us.

ROUS.—Vell, I say it is foolishness. Dere iss no use in Bazaars yet. Vy should de Church go into business. Dot is vot Rousmeyer says—und Rousmeyer iss a fine man. Meppe ve could make some money by running a horse races, ain't it? But we didn't, von't we?

POWERS.—Where would you get the money, Mrs. Rousmeyer?

SPET.—Yes, finance is such an intricate subject.

ROUS.—I would back the stingies into a corner und take it away from them.

STONE.—That is what we do now!

POWERS.—Why, we all give of our own free will.

WITH.—Of course.

ROUS.—Oh, iss it? Ask de Regordink Stoort, I say it. Ask him.

GUST.—Well, of course ——

STONE.—Giving is the foundation of religion.

SPET.—Oh, Mrs. Stone, you do say such terrible things.

(Confused talk.)

ENTER unannounced Fairfax at L.

(Sudden silence.)

FAIR.—Don't let me interrupt. *(Sees Billy.)* Ah, young man. *(Billy crosses to L. Front.)* Go on with your conversation. *(To Bill.)* I have telephoned to Bentonville for information about you. I find that there is nothing against you—that is known, and if you want to work for me you can come in the morning.

BILL.—I am not sure that I want to work for you, Mr. Fairfax.

FAIR.—Now don't get on your high horse. There are too many fools in the world now. When you see a chance for a job, jump at it.

BILL.—I don't like the way you treat my father, sir.

FAIR.—Well, think it over, think it over. Call and see me to-morrow. Mrs. Grigson, I warn you not to go on with that tea-meeting. I won't give you five cents.

GRIG. (*talking very rapidly*)—Mr. Fairfax, if you are a member of the Ladies' Aid, I am not aware of the fact. (*Coming closer.*) Did we ever get five cents from you? Didn't you charge us for a pound of loaf sugar we got for the last social.

ROUS.—I bought it.

GRIG.—Didn't you tell us that the use of the basement for that social was unscriptural? Didn't you—

SPET.—Oh, Mrs. Grigson, you are unfair.

REV. J.—Suppose we all try to get better acquainted. I am sure Mr. Fairfax and Mrs. Grigson too will realize that the foundation of success in any human association is a slight tendency towards compromise. Mr. Fairfax, perhaps you will stay and have a cup of tea with us.

MRS. S.—Yes, please do.

FAIR. (*taken aback*)—Thank you, but haven't time. It is very kind of you to ask me. I have never had much chance to meet people.

BILL. (*impulsively*)—I'll call in the morning, sir.

FAIR.—All right, my boy. I believe there is good stuff in you. Maybe there is good stuff in — some cantankerous old men —. Good night.

EXIT.

GRIG.—I doubt it.

SPET.—Now, Mrs. Grigson —

ROUS. (*to McCann*)—Ach. Don't put sugar in my tea. It is fattening. (*A general laugh.*)

(*All talk again till Bill crosses and sits again beside Miss Reesor.*)

(Bill speaks to her in dumb show.)

REES.—I can't sing at all, if I eat all this *(pointing to her well-laden plate.)*

BILL.—Why not sing now?

REES.—All right, I will. *(Rises.)* Mrs. Weston, please.

WEST. *(finishing her tea at a gulp)*—All right. *(Goes to piano.)*

(Miss Reesor sings In the Time of Roses, or any other good song.)

(While she sings Billy is enthralled.)

(Applause.)

Vi. goes to Rear Centre.

BILL. *(coming to Miss Reesor at C.)*—Say, I'd like to ca'll.

REES.—Well, I am engaged—every night this week, but— *(Turns. She and Bill walk back to sofa talking in dumb show.)*

ROUS. *(to Mrs. McCann.)*—Look at 'em. Isn't it lofely? Romances, aind't it?

SWIFT.—Mis. Smith, a number of letters were left at our place. I am Miss Swift — next door, you know. I am sure I don't know how the mistake was made. The address is clear enough. They are in the hall.

VI.—Thank you so much. Oh, I think a stupid Postman is just — stupid. *(At door L.)*

EXIT Rapidly L.

SWIFT *(to Mrs. Smith)*—I wanted to speak to you to-day, Mrs. Smith, but the last Minister's wife always objected to over-the-fence conversation.

GRIG.—Ladies, there are 27 pictures to be hung, and if we do not start, the thing will never be done.

(*All Rise.*)

GUST. (*to Mrs. Smith*)—My dear Mrs. Smith, how do you think you'll like it here?

MRS. S.—Oh, I feel sure we shall be very happy. Don't you think so, John?

BILL. (*to Miss Reesor*)—I will.

REV. JOHN.—Foster's Cyclopadia of Poetical Illustrations says:

The bluebird twitters on the wing
And sweetness dwells in every wind.
Our life is one eternal Spring
When brothers study to be kind.

CURTAIN.

